SUMMER HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION

energy saving tips

— Vacuum the coils of your refrigerator, and check for frost buildup in refrigerators and freezers which causes an appliance to work harder.

— Plug air leaks in the basement, attic and fireplace and seal leaks in pipes and ducts.

— Consider setting your thermostat as high as comfortably possible in the summer. The less difference between the indoor and outdoor temperatures, the lower your overall cooling bill will be. According to the United States Department of Energy, typically 44% of your utility bill goes for heating and cooling. (**Note: Seniors and people with special medical needs should check with their doctors before changing their normal home temperatures or turning off air conditioning units.)**

— Don't constantly move the thermostat up or down throughout the day because this wastes energy and money.

— Use ceiling fans to help assist in cooling.

— Consider using a programmable thermostat to raise the temperature when the home is unoccupied.

— Close drapes, shades and blinds during the day to keep sun from passively heating your home.

— Shift the use of heat-producing and major appliances such as ovens, dishwashers, clothes dryers and irons from mid-day to early in the morning or later at night when possible. The best times vary, but generally **before** 8 a.m. and **after** 8 p.m. whenever possible.

— Turn off lights when they are not needed. Consider replacing burned out light bulbs with new energy efficient fluorescent bulbs, fluorescent bulbs generate less heat so the energy is used more effectively to light an area. Consider using task lighting, which focuses light where you will need it, instead of brightly lighting an entire room.

— Make sure your air conditioner filter is clean. Clean or replace filters as needed. Clogged filters cause the unit to use more energy (replacing them takes just seconds and will save you money). Also consider getting a professional tune-up of your air conditioner to maximize its efficiency.

— Completely turn off PCs, monitors, and printers during long periods of non-use. This will help to cut costs.

— Wash clothes in cold water with a cold water detergent. Wash full loads of laundry for maximum efficiency. If less than full, set the water level in the washing machine to suit the size of the load, you'll save energy and water.

— Dry laundry on a line to avoid using clothes dryers. You can even put laundry in the dryer when it's almost dry; a sheet of fabric softener will take the stiffness out of the clothes. Clean the lint filter in the dryer after each use.

— Use your microwave, toaster oven, slow cooker, broiler oven or other energy saving appliances for cooking food. They use half the energy of a regular oven and keep your kitchen cooler. Using your outdoor grill to cook dinner also avoids heating up the kitchen.

— Take short showers instead of baths.

— Defrost food in your refrigerator, this helps cool the refrigerator, easing energy requirements, and it is better for the food than defrosting in room temperature. Keep refrigerator full so that it is cooling less open space (water jugs make good fillers).

— Cover pans when cooking on a stove top and use exhaust fans periodically, as required, to reduce indoor humidity.

— Avoid using extension cords with appliances. This cuts the efficiency of the equipment.

— Plan ahead before taking food from the refrigerator— don't leave door open any longer than necessary.

— Try to wash only full loads in the dishwasher and use the short cycle. Except for dirtiest dishes, short cycles work just as well but use less energy.

— Turn down the temperature on your water heater to 120 degrees.

— Make sure furniture and draperies are not blocking cooling outlets. Blocked outlets restrict air circulation, overwork the cooling equipment and increase operating costs.

— Close off rooms that are not used directly for cooling, so rooms most used by the household will remain cool. Turn off any unnecessary equipment in rooms not in use (such as TVs, stereos, fans, etc.).

— Keep storm windows and doors in place to reduce the air conditioning load.

— Caulk and weather strip doors and windows that leak air.

— Don't overload an electric circuit with high-wattage appliances. The normal limit for an electric circuit of 15 amps is 1600 watts. Overloaded circuits can blow fuses or trip circuit breakers as well as make any appliances on the circuit operate inefficiently.

What does it cost to run?

Device	Typical Consumption	Cost per hour
Heat pump or central air	15,000 watts	$1.50
Water heater or clothes dryer	4,000 watts	40 cents
Water pump	3,000 watts	30 cents
Space heater	1,500 watts	15 cents
Hair dryer	1,200 watts	12 cents
Electric range burner	1,000 watts	10 cents
Refrigerator	1,000 watts	10 cents
Computer and monitor	400 watts	4 cents
Light bulb	60 watts	.06 cents

NOTE: Figures based on 10 cents per KWH rate, Missouri average is 6.37 cents/KWH